

# One Shred of Hope moves into the neighborhood

By Chloe Newton

Pausing to reflect upon disabilities in the world, it does not take long to notice how heavily disabilities have affected human life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in four adults in the United States have been impacted by a disability of some sort.

Disabilities range from mental to physical. While some types of disabilities have been viewed as complicated and in need of medical attention, sometimes disabilities arise in more simple and more common ways, like a broken arm or an illness subjecting one to a bed.

Clinton serves as headquarters to the flourishing non-profit organization, One Shred of Hope (OSOH), which desires to reach out to those individuals with mental or physical disabilities.

Clintonian Lauren Compere, development director of One Shred of Hope and a quadriplegic, has been with the organization since its founding in 2017.

Compere wrote that the organization is, "A movement of God to serve individuals eighteen and over with documented physical and/or intellectual disabilities."

One Shred of Hope is "built on the foundations of the Gospel of Christ, its inherent truth, and its power over and through our lives." One of the organization's goals is to empower the disability community, "creating both spiritual and physical freedom for families affected by disabilities."

One Shred of Hope desires to serve those with disabilities by sharing the gospel with them, finding jobs or volunteer work for them, and aiding them to make their own impact on the world.

Currently, at their Clinton Industrial Park Drive location, One Shred of Hope provides secure document destruction - shredding services - both by dropoff of boxes of papers to be shredded or by locking containers placed on site and then picked up by One Shred of Hope employees when the container is full.

Having previously worked with other similar organizations, Compere saw the opportunity to help others like her when a friend and former coworker, Clintonian Joe Little, had a vision to add something different to the OSOH organization's offerings.

"He [Little] was passionate about [having] communities made up of people with and without disabilities living together, and he was also very passionate about sharing the gospel with these people," said Compere.

Little's idea became reality when the first and (as of now only) Hope House was renovated and opened this year in Clinton. The interior of the house was designed by Mississippi College interior design student Lorrin Cottrell (@lec\_interiordesign on Instagram).

Located in the middle of Clinton, the Hope House appears to be the average American home. However, the inside reveals how this quaint house will deeply impact all who live there. Renovations include a ramp, an accessible shower, swinging doors for wheelchairs to push, and low light switches. Compere currently resides in the house, but she wants others to also be able to experience its tremendous blessings. Future residents will be chosen based upon need and their disability.

"Our main goal was to renovate the bathroom to become wheelchair accessible," said Lorrin, "but we spruced up the rest of the house as well! I'm super excited to have been given the opportunity to work on this house, and I'm pleased with the way it turned out."

"For people like me," said Compere, "We are in...between the world of disability and not disabled. We are straddling this very strange line, and there is not a place or spot for folks like us...I would really love to cater to those who have a physical disability but have a very high functional intellectual ability."

In this special branch of One Shred of Hope, the idea is to place housing developments in regular neighborhoods near college communities all over Mississippi - and eventually beyond the state lines. College is an opportunity everyone wants to experience; however, not very many colleges have programs to fully integrate those with physical and mental disabilities into everyday activities.

Compere says the communities would allow able-bodied students with a desire to serve to come, live, intern and volunteer with neighbors affected by disabilities. Volunteer work could include going to games, having meals together, and going on spontaneous adventures. Interested college students could also live in the communities as neighbors to friends with disabilities, possibly providing students who are passionate about the medical field and/or ministry to gain valuable experience from spending time in the communities with the neighbors affected by disabilities. The neighbors with special needs have the opportunity to be involved on the college campuses through attending classes and events, working, and more.

Compere says the best ways for Clinton citizens to help the organization are through praying, connecting OSOH with other organizations for speaking engagements, through offering maintenance work, and/or giving financial support on their website, OneShredOfHope.org.

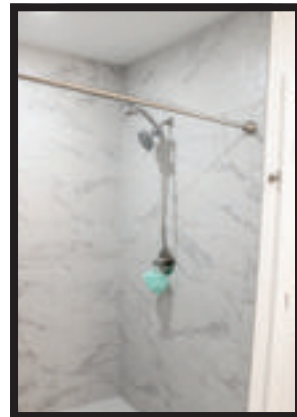
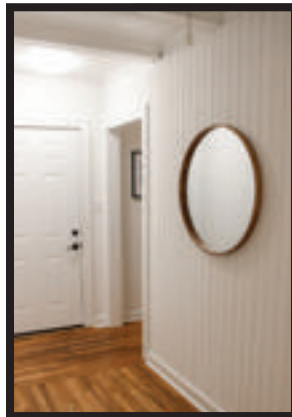
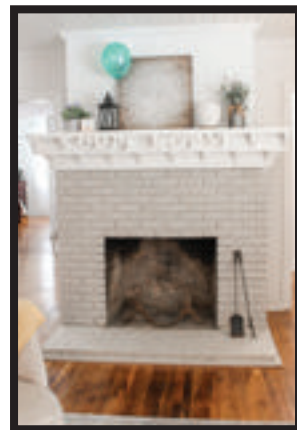
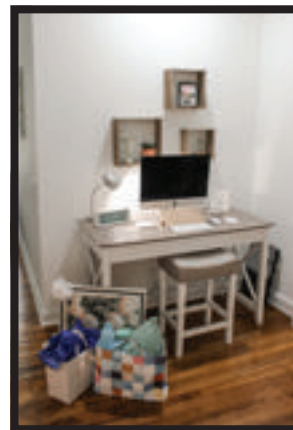
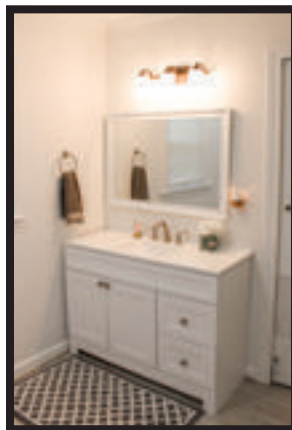
Down the road, One Shred of Hope desires to see more positive branding when it comes to disabilities, to create a program for others who are passionate about disability advocacy to begin their own communities filled with the disabled and the non-disabled, and to show others that those with disabilities are not a separate or cut off group of people.

Ultimately, the goals of One Shred of Hope are two-fold, says Compere. First, it's important to remind people that those with disabilities want to live life in the same way everyone else does. They want to work, to travel, to enjoy sports, and to build friendships. Second, the most important goal is to share the gospel.

Compere stated, "We want to say super true to the goal of coming to people with disabilities and sharing Jesus Christ with them and equipping them to share Christ with others. Who says people with disabilities can't be disciples too?"



The Clinton Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the One Shred of Hope "Hope House." Joining OSOH Development Director Lauren Compere, who will initially reside in the house, were OSOH staff and supporters, Chamber members, family and friends. For more information about the One Shred of Hope ministry and services, visit their Facebook page or OneShredOfHope.org.



All photos special to The Clinton Courier

